recognized by the State Governments are not given preference in the matter;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such a discrimination in this regard; and

(c) whether Government intends to take measures to remove this type of discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) As per the extant guidelines, there is 2% reservation under 'Freedom Fighter' category for allotment of Retail Outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships/SKO-LDO dealerships. Persons applying for dealerships/distributorships under this category should produce a certificate or Tamrapatra or an attested copy of the pension order issued by the Accountant General in pursuance of the sanction letter from Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India of their having been Freedom Fighter

Crisis of LPG in Assam

70. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the action proposed by Government to arrest the crisis of LPG in Assam; and

(b) whether there is any new proposal to increase the LPG distribution Centre in the said State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country, including the State of Assam and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors. OMCs have further reported that they have supplied 143.36 TMT (Thousand metric tonnes) of domestic LPG in the State of Assam during the period—April, 2007-January, 2008 as against 135.02 TMT during the corresponding period of last year. OMCs have not reported any backlog at present in supply of domestic LPG in the State of Assam.

(b) Government have given freedom to Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to set up LPG distributorships in accordance with their commercial assessment and locations are identified by them on the basis of available refill sale potential for sustaining independent distributorships. However, Government have advised OMCs to draw up Marketing Plans for covering semi-urban and rural areas. OMCs have finalized 33 locations in the State of Assam for setting up LPG distributorships. The setting up of LPG distributorships is a continuous process and involves identifying of a suitable location, arranging land for setting up of godown and other statutory clearances.

Supply of gas from KG basin to Maharashtra

71. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Maharashtra Government has sought the Ministry's intervention for allocation of gas from Reliance Industries KG-basin pipeline for a proposed 1,040 MW extension of Maha Genco's Uran Plant;

(b) whether the State Government has also approached the Ministry for allocation of extra gas for the existing Uran gas-based project, which is running under capacity for want of gas;

(c) whether the State Government has argued that an additional allocation of one MMSCMD would help to generate additional 250 MW currently; and

(d) if so, whether the Ministry has considered the request of Maharashtra Government to get the KG basin gas for Uran Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Government of Maharashtra has requested long-term supplies from Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)'s offshore field in KG basin for Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited (Maha Genco)'s proposed 1040 MW expansion of Gas based Combined Cycle Power Generation Project at Uran. Government of Maharashtra has also informed that the present project has an idle capacity of about 400 MW because of limited availability of natural gas. Government of Maharashtra has requested that 1.0 Million Standard Cubic Metres Per Day (MMSCMD) of Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (R-LNG) be supplied to the project at pooled price during the period from commissioning of the Panvel-Uran spurline to commencement of supply of gas by RIL, which would enhance production by 200 MW. RIL has indicated that they would supply 1.0 MMSCMD natural gas to MahaGenco for its Uran Power Plant.

Allocation of "Profit Gas" from KG basin to Andhra Pradesh

72. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh Government has made request/demand for providing it 50 per cent of 'Profit Gas' that is extracted from KG basin to meet its various demands;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a request to this effect has been received in this Ministry; and

(c) if so, what action the Ministry has taken on the above request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Central Government has accepted the recommendations of Twelfth Finance Commission to share Profit Petroleum (PP) arising out of onland contracts under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) with the concerned States in the ratio of 50:50. Therefore, this profit sharing will not be applicable to KG Basin offshore blocks.

Tourism project in villages

73. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken up rural tourism project to attract foreign tourists;

(b) if so, how may villages would be brought under the project in the first year and how much money is earmarked for the purpose;